

D.2 A TEMPLATE FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This appendix provides a four-part template for preparing a public involvement strategy that covers the key phases in preparing a GMP/EIS or EA. The first part of the template is completed once for the entire planning project. The second, third, and fourth parts are completed for each phase of the project. The template forms and their information are just suggestions to get you started thinking and should be modified to meet your individual park's need.

While there are many approaches to developing a public involvement strategy, the following template provides a simple framework for organizing your thoughts that can be customized for a particular park and its local circumstances. The framework has been divided into parts to assist in describing it in the methods and tools section.

Part 1. Purpose of this Public Involvement Strategy and Situational Analysis (Complete once for the entire planning project.) [See example in D.2.a]			
a. Purpose b. Issues c. Public and Stakeholders d. Special Circumstances			
Parts 2–4 (Complete for each planning phase.) [See examples in D.2.b–D.2.d]			
Planning Phase:			
Part 2	a. Public Involvement Goal for this Phase		
	b. Key Planning Steps	c. Planning Product	
Part 3	Information Needed from the Public	Information Needed by the Public	
Part 4	Public Involvement Activities for this Phase	Team Member Responsible	Due Date

D.2.a Part 1: Methods and Tools for Public Involvement Strategy and Situational Analysis

Part 1 is only completed once for the project. There are four components.

- 1a. Purpose
- 1b. Issues
- 1c. Public and Stakeholders
- 1d. Special Circumstances

Purpose	Strategy
<p>Part 1a. Identify the purpose of this public involvement strategy.</p>	<p>The first question a planning team needs to answer regarding public participation is: “What is the overall goal or intent of the public participation effort for this plan — what do you hope to accomplish by involving the public?” Generally, the goals of public involvement for a GMP are to inform the public of a decision to be made; to provide opportunities for the public to be heard before the decision in selecting a plan; and to provide opportunities for the public to influence the decision.</p> <p>More specifically, a public involvement strategy will usually have at least three primary goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and educate the public about the need for the NPS GMP / EIS (or EA) and about the key issues being addressed. • Provide the public with opportunities for meaningful involvement in the planning and NEPA processes. • Strengthen and enhance relationships between the park and its stakeholders.
<p>Part 1b. Identify the issues and level of controversy.</p>	<p>It is recommended that the list of issues and the list of stakeholders and partners (below) be developed simultaneously because it is easier to think about them that way: As the team thinks about issues it will find itself thinking of individuals and groups who are concerned about those issues. When the team thinks about the public and stakeholders, it will think of issues those groups are bound to raise. Both internal and external stakeholders need to be considered in identifying issues.</p> <p>For each issue the planning team should assess the level of controversy. Even people who are highly experienced in public participation get taken by surprise. Something that seems like it should be highly controversial may not generate much interest, while something that seems quite bland may become a battleground.</p> <p>There is no magic way to predict controversy, but there are indicators of probable controversy. The most basic indicator of controversy, of course, is the significance of the impacts. For example, if park roads are going to be built or closed, if there will be major increases in pollution added to the environment, if there will be major adverse impacts on employment, or if limits are being proposed on visitor numbers or activities, you can count on considerable controversy. It is often worth asking the superintendent or regional director what issues he or she thinks will be most controversial.</p> <p>There are other indicators of controversy. Issues that might by themselves seem relatively noncontroversial can become highly controversial if any of the following situations occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a prior controversy on the same issue, (e.g. controversy over prior actions). • The issue is closely related to another major issue over which there is continuing controversy or a power struggle (e.g., snowmobile use in Yellowstone). • The issue touches on local political topics such as land use or economic development that are the basis for political debate within the area.

Purpose	Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The issue is the total reason for existence of a stakeholder group. <p>Sometimes people within the planning team will know the stakeholders well enough to make an informed judgment as to how intense their interest will be. On occasion, though, the only way to assess the potential for controversy is to meet with stakeholders and discuss their interest in the issue and their suggestions for what kind of participation is appropriate. These interviews or small group meetings can play an important role in developing a successful public participation plan.</p>
Part 1c. Identify the stakeholders and partners.	<p>If possible involve the superintendent (and possibly the regional director) in identifying the stakeholders and partners. Although it may not be possible to have these individuals actually participate in planning sessions, they should be asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which public and stakeholder groups are most likely to exert influence in the park, region, and Washington? Whose participation in the process is essential for credibility? Are there other groups or individuals who have traditionally been associated with or involved in the park and that should be included in the planning effort? <p>Pay attention to those who might be interested but have not traditionally been involved in the GMP planning process.</p>
Part 1d. Identify any special circumstances that need to be considered	<p>In developing a public involvement strategy, sometimes special circumstances need to be considered. Examples of special circumstances to consider are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cultural/ethnic sensitivities (e.g., most impacted people are from a single cultural/ethnic minority) interest of national stakeholders (e.g., most interested stakeholders are in Washington D.C., not near the park) distance (e.g., interested groups are scattered over a large area geographically) issue is connected politically to other issues (i.e., it may be difficult to keep this issue distinct from other controversial issues) political sensitivities (e.g., key political figures have positions or reputations to defend related to this issue)

Ideas to Consider in Completing Part 1

Purpose: This plan will allow [park name] to demonstrate that it has solicited public input, worked with relevant governments, communicated its intentions to the public, and incorporated the concerns of the public into the development of the plan and EIS. The plan has three [or more if needed for your park] primary goals:

- Educate the public about the need for the general management plan / environmental impact statement and about the important issues being addressed.
- Provide the public with opportunities for meaningful involvement in the planning and NEPA processes.
- Enhance relationships between the park and its stakeholders.

Issues: [A brief description the issues or concerns driving preparation of a general management plan / environmental impact statement. This information can be found in the PMIS statement and in discussions with park and region staff. For each issue, note the expected level of controversy and the rationale for that judgment.]

Example: Issue 1: Reopening XYZ Canyon to public use. Some people want the canyon opened for limited public recreational use, some prefer it be open for unlimited recreational use, and others prefer the canyon be permanently closed to recreational use to prevent resource impacts. The level of controversy is high because many local residents used to use this area before it was closed, and are upset with the NPS. Environmental groups would strongly oppose any suggestion to reopen the canyon to unlimited public use.

Public and Stakeholders: [List the individuals, groups, and stakeholders that need to be included in the planning process. Some examples of key stakeholders are listed below. Add or delete groups as appropriate.]

- The congressional delegations that are contiguous to or interested in [park name]
- Local, state, and regional elected officials from this same geographic area, as well as some of the public policy organizations that provide consultation to these officials
- Government partners, including city, township, parish, county, region, state, commonwealth, federal and tribal governments
- Private sector partners, including landowners, special interests, industry and agriculture groups, tourism councils, friends groups, Chambers of Commerce
- Park resource user groups
- Environmental and conservation groups
- Traditionally associated groups
- Tourism, business, and commerce-related groups
- Civic groups interested in public policy and environment-related issues
- Colleges and universities in the regional area of interest
- Other state, regional, and federal governmental organizations, as well as tribal governments

Special Circumstances: [Identify any special conditions that may affect public involvement in this plan. Examples could include high level of Native American involvement; politicians that are strongly interested in the park and the plan; or if the park is attracting a lot of media attention.]

D.2.b Part 2: Methods and Tools for the Planning Phase

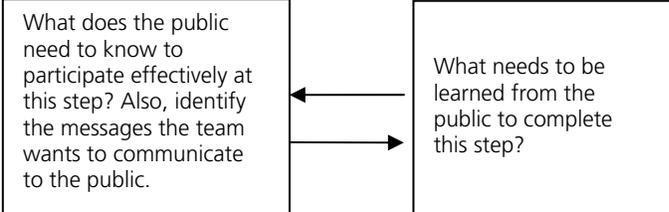
Complete for each planning phase (i.e., scoping, alternatives, draft plan/EIS or EA, final plan/EIS). There are three parts:

- 2a. Public involvement goal for this phase
- 2b. Key planning steps
- 2c. Planning product

Purpose	Strategy
Part 2a. Identify the planning phase.	Parts 2-4 of the template are completed for each planning phase: the foundation, scoping, alternatives, draft plan/EIS, final plan/EIS, or record of decision.
Part 2a. Identify the goals of involvement for the public, stakeholders, and partners for this phase of the planning process.	To develop public participation objectives, simply ask: "What do we have to accomplish with the public by the end of this planning phase?" Then write an objective describing the completion of that task. Generic objectives of public participation include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the public about possible options. • Obtain public comment on a list of options. • Have a dialogue on the range of alternatives to be considered. • Get agreement on the range of alternatives to be considered.
Part 2b and c. Identify the key planning steps and products for this planning phase.	Identifying the key steps and products will help planners identify where public involvement is needed by clarifying the planning activities and products for this planning phase.

D.2.c Part 3: Methods and Tools for Public Information

Complete for each planning phase. Information is needed from the public, as well as by the public.

Purpose	Strategy
Analyze the exchange of information that must take place to achieve the objectives for each phase in the NPS planning process.	<p>For each of the public participation objectives there is an exchange of information with the public that must take place.</p> <p>For each phase in the planning process:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>An example of what this analysis might look like for one objective, "Obtain a complete identification and understanding of how the problem is viewed by all significant interests," is shown below:</p> <p>Information exchange from the Park Service to stakeholders/public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the planning and decision-making process • What the agency knows about the issues or concerns • Opportunities for participation <p>Information Exchange from stakeholders/public to the Park Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How different groups see the issues and concerns • How the issues and concerns affect different stakeholders • The intensity of the impacts • Which parts of the public see themselves as affected <p>This same kind of analysis is completed for each public participation objective.</p>

D.2.d Part 4: Methods and Tools for Public Involvement Activities

Complete for each planning phase. Part 4 consists of determining public involvement activities, the responsible team member, and the date to be completed.

Purpose	Strategy
<p>Part 4. Select the specific public involvement and partner techniques for each phase in the NPS planning process.</p>	<p>The next step is to select techniques that will achieve the public participation objectives. Many planners start with the step of selecting a public involvement technique without doing the strategic thinking of the preceding steps. This often results in a technique that may not be as effective in achieving objectives. Below is a list of frequently used public participation techniques. This list is divided into techniques for getting information to the public (one-way), getting it from the public (one-way) and exchanging information (interaction between the agency and the public). More information on these techniques can be found on websites referenced in the appendix.</p> <p>Information-providing techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • briefings • workshops • exhibits/displays • interpretive programs • feature stories • information repositories • mailings containing technical reports/environmental reports • news conferences • newsletters • newspaper inserts • news releases • press kits • public service announcements • presentations to groups • websites (NPS and site-specific) <p>Information-gathering techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus groups • mail-in response forms (including advertisements, inserts or newsletters) • polls, surveys, questionnaires <p>Interaction / information exchange techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advisory groups/task forces • hotlines • interviews • open houses • participatory television/cable television • public meetings • retreats • workshops
<p>Assign responsibilities and due dates.</p>	<p>Assigning responsibility for tasks and due dates ensures that tasks are not forgotten and that they are completed on time.</p>

D.2.e Ideas to Consider in Completing Parts 2, 3, and 4 for Each Phase

Planning Phase: Scoping

Part 2 — Public Involvement

Introduce the project to key stakeholders, identify the range of publics and other interests in the area, and refine the public involvement strategy based on the information received. Determine what issues need to be addressed during the general management plan process and what concerns there are about the park and the planning process.

Key Planning Steps	Planning Product
Reconfirm information in the foundation statement. Actively engage the public in discussing and identifying issues, values, opinions, etc.	List of the issues to be addressed during the general management plan process and what concerns there are about the park and the planning process. List of those issues that will not be considered during the planning process. Newsletters #1 and #2.

Part 3 — Information Needed from/by the Public

Information Needed FROM the Public	Information Needed BY the Public
Confirmation of purpose and significance statements, primary interpretive themes, and special mandates prepared in the Foundation Statement.	<u>Message:</u> The NPS is pleased the process is starting and welcomes the opportunity to work with the public to develop a preferred alternative through the process
Willingness to be involved in the process and be added to park mailing list	<u>Message:</u> The planning team is looking for feedback throughout the general management plan / environmental impact statement planning process.
Information that may be helpful in the planning process, or people or organizations that should be involved in the planning process	<u>Message:</u> Planning goal is to protect the park's natural and cultural resources while providing a quality visitor experience.
Confirmation of key stakeholder and public concerns or issues that need to be addressed in the EIS.	<u>Message:</u> The best way to look at the various types of impacts and issues involved is through the environmental impact statement process. The EIS process allows strong public and stakeholder participation, comprehensive environmental analysis, and mechanisms to review the work at different stages in the process.
Confirmation of level of controversy for each issue among key stakeholders and public.	<u>Message:</u> The EIS process will help us to clearly document the environmental impacts, assess the impacts of possible management alternatives, and work with the public to develop an acceptable preferred alternative.
	<u>Message:</u> There will be a variety of ways for people to make their interests and issues known, including newsletters, the website, attending open houses, comment forms, informal discussions with park staff, and through elected officials.
	General management planning process, schedule and opportunities for involvement throughout process.
	Park background and orientation information.
	Draft purpose and significance statements, primary interpretive themes, and special mandates.
	Preliminary list of issues that will and will not be addressed in the general management plan, and the rationale.
	Preliminary summary of public comments and issues that will and will not be addressed in the general management plan (newsletter 2).

Part 4 — Typical Public Involvement Activities

Typical Public Involvement Activities for this Phase	Team Member Responsible	Due Date
Publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the <i>Federal Register</i> .		
Meet with NPS staff to discuss process and gather issues and concerns.		
Prepare scoping and meeting publicity (news releases, flyers, emails, media briefings, and other outreach techniques that will be used).		
Develop a project mailing list (or refine existing list).		
Prepare newsletter 1, with welcome information, planning process description and schedule, Foundation Statement information, park map, preliminary issues (if known), invitation to participate at meetings and throughout project, and mail back response card and request comments via the Internet. Also post on park website and PEPC.		
Prepare a PowerPoint presentation that can be used for public meetings, posted on the web, or sent to key stakeholders (and/or use the NPS planning video).		
Prepare a “frequently asked questions and answers” handout.		
Determine if there are outlets in the park or local communities to distribute information about the process and scoping meetings (e.g., backcountry permit office, visitor center, public library).		
<u>Media Relations</u> : at a minimum issue a press release about the planning process and public meetings. The park staff may also choose to conduct a pre-public meeting forum for the press. The objective of the media outreach will be to inform the public about the planning process and alert them to the need for interested parties to be heard.		
Send introductory letter and conduct briefings with American Indian tribes and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).		
Conduct scoping meetings (determine format that will be most effective for your public; stakeholders may provide recommendations).		
Make individual contacts with congressional delegation.		
Meet with local, state and federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, state Department of Natural Resources, county board).		
Meet with private organizations (e.g., NGOs, chambers of commerce, service clubs, neighborhood organizations, etc.).		
Analyze scoping comments using PEPC; post a summary on park’s website.		
Prepare newsletter #2 summarizing scoping comments, identifying issues to be addressed in the planning process and those issues that will not be addressed and why. Include a schedule of the planning process and how the public can remain involved. Inform the public of any special studies being prepared to support analysis or decisions in the process.		
Refine the public involvement strategy as necessary.		

Planning Phase: Alternatives

Part 2 — Public Involvement Goal

The public and stakeholders are introduced to and understand the alternatives. There is a clear relation to the comments received during scoping and the alternatives as presented. The public has opportunities to comment on the alternatives—pointing out strengths, areas for improvements, additional data needs and preferences.

Key Planning Steps	Planning Product
Analyze resources.	Clearly defined alternative concepts
Develop potential management zones.	List of management prescriptions
Define alternative concepts.	Description of alternatives, including management zoning maps
Develop and map alternative management zone patterns.	Newsletter #3

Part 3 — Information Needed from/by the Public

Information Needed FROM the Public	Information Needed BY the Public
Reaction to the alternatives—what are the strong points, what can be improved, as well as preferences, observations, and suggestions.	Message: The planning team has been reviewing public comments received from the scoping process, meeting with partners, and conducting environmental analyses.
Identify others to be involved.	Message: A preferred alternative has not been selected yet — we want to hear your views.
Provide additional data sources and information to help understand and prepare the impacts of the alternatives.	Message: Alternatives have been developed regarding possible changes to park operations and visitor and resource management
Information that could be helpful in selecting/developing a preferred alternative.	Message: Our planning goal is to protect the park’s natural and cultural resources while providing a quality visitor experience.
Reaction to the alternatives—what are the strong points, what can be improved, as well as preferences, observations, and suggestions.	Message: GMP alternatives focus on the broadest level of decision making for the park, which is generally represented by alternative ways of zoning the park, with associated differences in resource conditions, visitor experiences, and kinds and levels of management, access, and development.
	Management zones: What are they and how are they used in park planning and management?
	Identify when the draft document will be on review and ways the public can provide input.

Part 4 — Typical Public Involvement Activities

Typical Public Involvement Activities for this Phase	Team Member Responsible	Due Date
Produce newsletter #3 with invitation to participate at a series of public meetings. Also include the following information: management zones, zoning maps, brief update on what the planning team has been doing and has learned since newsletter #2, request for comments on the draft alternatives, schedule, how to stay involved. Include a mailback response form and ask for using PEPC on the strengths and what can be improved in each alternative. Also, ask for what was overlooked and new ideas or information.		
Conduct public open houses to present the alternatives and listen to public comments.		
Take advantage of interested public group’s regularly scheduled meetings or newsletters to distribute information on the GMP process and the issues that will generally be covered in the EIS.		
Conduct meetings with NPS park, regional and Washington staff.		
Prepare meeting publicity (news releases, flyers, emails, media briefings, and other outreach techniques that will be used).		
Prepare a PowerPoint presentation that can be used for public meetings, posted on the web, or sent to key stakeholders.		
Prepare a “frequently asked questions and answers” handout.		
Determine if there are outlets in the park or local communities to distribute information about the process and scoping meetings. (e.g. backcountry permit office, visitor center, public library).		
Media Relations: at a minimum a press release will be issued about the planning process and public meetings. The team may also choose to conduct a pre-public meeting forum for the press.		
Host Jurisdictional Meetings (Members of this group will be higher-ranking representatives who are decision-makers or report directly to decision-makers).		
Meet with tribal representatives.		

Typical Public Involvement Activities for this Phase	Team Member Responsible	Due Date
Meet with local, state, and federal agencies (e.g., State Historic Preservation Officer, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, county board).		
Conduct focus groups to identify possible approaches to resolving planning issues.		
Analyze and summarize public comments.		

Planning Phase: Draft Plan/EIS or Plan/EA

Part 2 — Public Involvement Goal

Provide input on the draft plan. Provide opportunities for public suggestions for improvements and additional information.

Key Planning Steps	Planning Product
Describe the affected environment and the environmental impacts of the alternative. Estimate the cost of the alternatives. Select a preferred alternative. Prepare and distribute the draft plan.	Draft general management plan / EIS Public summary of plan (optional)

Part 3 — Information Needed from/by the Public

Information Needed FROM the Public	Information Needed BY the Public
Feedback on the document. Indication of the level of controversy. Substantive comments and suggestions for improvements.	<u>Message:</u> Planning goal is to protect the park's natural and cultural resources while providing a quality visitor experience.
Overall public views and key stakeholders views of the preferred alternative. Identification of which alternative(s) the key stakeholders prefer.	<u>Message:</u> Although a preferred alternative will be presented, the NPS can amend that alternative based on public input. The NPS can choose a final preferred alternative based on any of the options that were analyzed in the draft EIS or EA.
Identification of who wants the draft document and in what form (hard copy, summary, CD, electronic copy, website availability).	<u>Message:</u> There will again be a wide variety of ways for people to make their interests and issues known, including newsletters, the website, attending open houses, informal discussions with park staff, and through their elected officials.
	<u>Message:</u> The NEPA process will help us to clearly document the environmental impacts, assess the impacts of possible management alternatives, and work with the public to develop an acceptable final preferred alternative.
	Description of the preferred alternative and other alternatives, and their environmental consequences.
	Explanation of the types of comments the NPS is seeking from the public in reviewing the plan.
	Description of ways to provide comments on the draft document and end date of comment period.

Part 4 — Typical Public Involvement Activities

Typical Public Involvement Activities for this Phase	Team Member Responsible	Due Date
Publish Notice of Availability in <i>Federal Register</i> .		
Produce newsletter #4 announcing the public meetings to discuss the draft EIS or EA and outlining the preferred alternative. The newsletter will encourage comment and outline the various ways the public can provide input. This will be distributed electronically, through regular mailing lists, and will be posted on the park's website and PEPC.		
Schedule a round of public outreach. All of the outreach mechanisms used in the scoping process will be used during this period. The website will be updated, internal park briefings conducted prior to the public outreach, and individual contacts made with key Congressional leaders and stakeholders.		
Prepare a Power Point presentation on the process and alternatives.		
Prepare a frequently asked questions handout.		
Post the draft plan on the park's website and PEPC.		
Prepare and distribute a press release stating the plan is available, public meeting schedule and locations, and how to get a copy of the plan.		
Host another briefing for government officials and agencies (e.g., the State Historic Preservation Officer, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, county board) to discuss the DEIS and solicit feedback on the preferred alternative before the public meetings. Members of this group will be higher-ranking representatives who are decision-makers or report directly to decision-makers.		
Meet with tribal representatives.		
Conduct another round of meetings to solicit public input about the DEIS and the preferred alternative. News releases, flyers, emails, media briefings, and other outreach techniques will be used to publicize the meetings. The team may consider display ads if these techniques do not prove to be comprehensive enough.		
Encourage groups to distribute updated information about the project via their own electronic networks		

Planning Phase: Final Plan/EIS

Part 2 — Public Involvement Goal

Provide copies of the document to all interested stakeholders and members of the public.

Key Planning Steps	Planning Product
Respond to public comments on the draft plan / EIS.	Final GMP / EIS
Decide whether or not to change the preferred alternative.	Public summary of the final document (optional)
Prepare final plan / EIS.	

Part 3 — Information Needed from/by the Public

Information Needed FROM the Public	Information Needed BY the Public
Identify who wants copies of the final document and in what format.	<u>Message:</u> Planning goal is to protect the park’s natural and cultural resources while providing a quality visitor experience.
	<u>Message:</u> We first looked at a very fundamental question: What do we want the park to be like in the future? Our objective in this process was to first capture people’s sense of what the park should be like 20 years from now, and develop a picture of what an ideal park experience should be.
	<u>Message:</u> The EIS process has allowed strong public and stakeholder participation, comprehensive environmental analysis, and opportunities to review the work at different stages in the process.
	<u>Message:</u> This GMP is focused on the management of uses as people experience the park.
	NPS responses to substantive comment on the draft document.
	General overview of public responses to the draft document.
	Explanation of how peoples’ views were used by the NPS in revising the draft document. People who have been involved in the process need to know what has been decided.
	Explanation of how the GMP/EIS will progress from this point forward.

Part 4 — Typical Public Involvement Activities

Typical Public Involvement Activities for this Phase	Team Member Responsible	Due Date
Publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the <i>Federal Register</i> .		
Distribute a summary of the final GMP /EIS (optional).		
One more round of jurisdictional meetings with key stakeholders will be held to present the final recommended alternative and outline the next steps. This will help park staff as they prepare for the ROD and implementation.		
Post the final document on the park website and PEPC.		

Planning Phase: Record of Decision (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impacts (EA)

Part 2 — Public Involvement Goal

Inform the public of the decision (which alternative will be implemented in the park).

Encourage support for implementation of the general management plan.

Key Planning Steps	Planning Product
Finalize Record of Decision or Finding of No Significant Impact.	Record of Decision or Finding of No Significant Impact Summary of the record of decision

Part 3 — Information Needed from/by the Public

Information Needed FROM the Public	Information Needed BY the Public
Who wants copies of the record of decision or finding of no significant impact?	<u>Message</u> : Planning goal is to protect the park's natural and cultural resources while providing a quality visitor experience.
	<u>Message</u> : We want you to continue to stay involved in the management of the park.

Part 4 — Typical Public Involvement Activities

Typical Public Involvement Activities for this Stage	Team Member Responsible	Due Date
Publish Record of Decision (ROD) (or summary) for an EIS in the <i>Federal Register</i> or .		
Prepare and issue a press release stating the decision.		
Post the record of decision on the park website and PEPC.		